A HUSTLER GOES POLITICAL: THE FLINT INITIATIVE by STEPHEN FRANK

CALIFORNIA ★ POLITICAL
REVIEW
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SEEKING THE Narrow Door

Arnold Schwarzenegger takes on Democrat obstructionism

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"What happened next was all a blur."

Correctional Officer Nicole Hawthorne and her partner were escorting inmates to morning meal at California State Prison, Los Angeles County.

Without warning, one of the inmates attacked her partner. When Officer Hawthorne went to his rescue, she was attacked by another inmate.

"What happened next was all a blur," she said.

The inmate struck her repeatedly, beating her unconscious.

It was more than a year before she could return to duty. Two years later, she still suffers frequent headaches and severe back pain.

On average, nine officers are assaulted inside California prisons every day.

For them, a bad day at work can be a real killer.

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CORRESPONDENCE

More from 'Wild Bill'

May/June was outstanding. I wonder if I'm the only one that appreciated the look of continuity it gave for the conservative movement here in California. H.L. Richardson's "A full-time legislature? Yuk!" was terrific, and reminded me of our heroes of the past. Once upon a time long ago I actually read H.L.'s *What makes you think we read the bills?*, and it was fun to see the excerpt. Let's see more from "Wild Bill."

"Self-inflicted gridlock," by Tom McClintock, showed what not enough people realize: that our daily traffic nightmares are government-created. Tom is a statewide treasure.

Finally the editor's profile on Donna Arduin gave me hope there are at least some principled conservatives working in Ahnolt's administration. If the governor actually listens to her and implements some of her ideas, there might be hope for our economy yet. She seems a real bright spot in the corner office. How about an "Arduin for State Controller" committee?

Wallace Thompson
San Diego

Summum bonum

Mr. Stirling ("From Earth Day to Election Day: 2004," *CPR*, May/June) might help his otherwise commendable stand against environmentalists if he reconsidered his stigmatizing of "the collective good" to argue his case.

He doesn't mention who introduced this apparent bastardization of the "common good" (or *summum bonum*, etc.). The latter has enjoyed respect from thinkers through the ages and can hardly now be condemned as mere "collectivism." Instead of characterizing Greens as "collectivists" why not be more specific: Authoritarian reform liberals attempting to implement, in Stirling's words (quoting William Myers III), "a harsh pro-species/anti-people bias," leading to "economic stagnation and increased loss of livelihoods, private property rights, and lives, both human and species." It's more accurate to tab their error as unscientific environmentalism than "collectivism," when the latter covers a multitide of sins as well as historically appropriate motives. In their deliberations, didn't the Founding Fathers seek the "common good"?

W. Edward Chynoweth
Sanger

Mr. Chynoweth equates "stigmatizing" of "the collective good" with criticizing devotion to "the common good." But Mr. Stirling clearly does not share the view that these phrases are interchangeable — for good reason: "the collective good," as he employs the phrase, refers to the left-wing, materialist idea that ideological imperatives, dishonestly labeled "in the interests of all the people," justify any expediency, such as trampling individual or, for that matter, group property rights. This is the polar opposite of the Founding Fathers' objective in working to secure for the people the blessings of liberty and to affirm the Christian proposition that our inalienable rights are inalienable precisely because they are endowed upon us by our Creator, an authority above any notion of expediency, human or otherwise. By securing and affirming those things, the Founding Fathers saw themselves serving what they meant by the common good. The left employs such words as "collective" for the precise purpose of avoiding the confusion with genuine concern for good that Mr. Chynoweth, despite the best efforts of the materialists, seems to have fallen prey to. The left having already supplied us with the handy "collectivist" label, such cumbersome phrases as "authoritarian reform liberals" are, we may be thankful, unneeded.

— editor

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SACRAMENTO SPECTATOR

For want of a nail, the shoe was lost;

For want of the shoe, the horse was lost;

For want of the horse, the rider was lost;

For want of the rider, the battle was lost;

For want of the battle, the kingdom was lost,

And all for the want of a horseshoe nail.

— Mother Goose

If the Democrats lose ground in the Legislature this November they will look back on their failure to pass the June version of Governor Schwarzenegger's budget as the lost nail that led to disaster.

Now in fairness to the Donkey Party, they balked at the June budget only after some Pachyderms in the Legislature told the governor he had been had in his negotiations and that they could not go along with any more accommodation of Democrats (*i.e.,* spending increases).

Nonetheless, it was the Democrats who vetoed the last minute changes the legislative GOP demanded. And it was Democrat intransigence that finally got under the governor's skin and caused him to embark on campaign-like tours of marginal legislative districts.

For all his bonhomie — which legislators of both parties say is genuine — Schwarzenegger is a highly disciplined over-achiever who plans his next moves carefully. It is no accident that he is a killer chess player.

Neither was his taunt of the Democrats as "girlie men" an accident, nor his asking voters to "terminate" recalcitrant Democrats. They were part of a well thought-out plan to establish justification in the voters' minds for an all-out Schwarzenegger effort to elect Republicans this fall.

The governor comes from a business that often relies on "handshake deals" made long before actual contracts are signed. He believes he had a handshake deal with the Democrats on the budget, so he believes their later refusals constituted perfidy and posturing. He is, to put it mildly, exceptionally ticked off. If the mood holds, an empire lost might be the result.

Now by the time you read this a veneer of peace and light might have been spread over the capitol. A budget will most likely have been enacted. But the real significance of the imbroglio of early July will be that it propelled Schwarzenegger into the roll of full blown partisan warrior in the fall legislative campaigns.

Some Democrats caught on to this immediately, which is why they and their media megaphones tried to make the "girlie man" jab into a federal hate crime offense. They fear an activated and animated Terminator on the campaign trail, so they tried to make his clearly jocular comments the issue instead of their budget antics.

The voters aren't buying it. As the governor was impolitic enough to point out during that brouhaha, the Legislature's approval rating is in the low 30s; his is in the mid 70s.

All this is good news for GOP candidates. Politics is a fickle business, so attitudes could change in the corner office between now and fall. But for now, the Democrats' sabotage of the June budget was the nail out of the shoe, which could cost them not only a horse but eventually their legislative empire.

It's enough to make a Democrat feel like a girlie man; and enough to get the GOP thoroughly pumped up.

— A. P. C.

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He *must* have been liberal

The media grapple with the problem of a nationally-loved conservative president, arriving at the only explanation their minds, evidently, can endure.

GEORGE NEUMAYR

When Maureen Reagan, a feminist who rejected her father's pro-life policies, considered a run for the U.S. Senate in 1982, reporters asked Reagan: Is she serious? "I hope not," Reagan replied. Reagan's brother, Neil, ended up supporting Maureen Reagan's opponent.

The press used to make a point of noting that the liberal Reagan children were mystified by their father's conservative philosophical views. But now the press treats the children as experts on his views and guardian of his ideological legacy. "Reaganite by Association? His Family Won't Allow it," headlined a June *New York Times* story about the Reagans' rejection of George W. Bush as an ideological heir to Ronald Reagan. By "family" here, the *New York Times* means the Reagans who agree with its editorial board. The *Times* made sure to ignore Michael Reagan's support for Bush's policies.

Patti Davis, however, received a careful hearing from the *Times,* even though her name change indicates that she hasn't wanted to be a "Reaganite by Association" for some time. Oh well — her support for the "miracle of stem-cell research, a miracle the Bush White House thinks it can block" is far too useful for the *Times* to pass up. The *Times* used to embarrass Reagan in life with reports on his daughter's various pharmaceutical pursuits and drug tinkering; in death, they honor him with her expertise on stem-cell experimentation.

When Ron Reagan Jr. was a ballerina and *Playboy* writer, the press enjoyed reporting that father and son didn't quite understand each other. Reagan wished his son pursued "more dignified" work than scribbling for *Playboy,* they reported with relish. But the gulf of misunderstanding between father and son rapidly closed as the press turned to Ron Jr. for magisterial pronouncements on doctrinal Reaganism. The *Times* relayed his comment that the Bush "administration is not my father's — these people are overly reaching, overly aggressive, overly secretive and just plain corrupt." Too bad the *Times* forgot to mention that Ron Jr. voted for Ralph Nader in 2000. Perhaps Ron Jr. considers Nader his father's political heir.

Ron Jr. is so far out on the liberal spectrum that he regards the Democrats as unforgivably conservative. In an interview with *Salon* last year, he called himself a "progressive," rejecting both parties: "I'm certainly not a Republican; I couldn't belong to any party that had leaders like Tom DeLay. And the Democrats are too busy trying to out-Republican the Republicans." His eulogy at his father's funeral was so outrageously anti-Republican television viewers might have mistaken him for one of Paul Wellstone's kids.

Will Ron Jr. run for political office? the press now eagerly wonders. "I hope not," one can imagine his father saying. But given the tone of his gratuitously political eulogy, it would be surprising if he didn't. Surely he will harness the power of his father's name for "progressive" causes and organizations his father spent his career trying to stop.

Notice also the press's sudden interest in Nancy Reagan's understanding of the Reagan canon. Reporters no longer point out her reliance on astrology now that they find her scientific views on stem cells from destroyed embryos so authoritative. In the 1980s when Nancy Reagan was urging her husband to oust or marginalize conservatives like Bill Clark from his administration — she derided them as "jump-off-the-cliff-

---

Mr. George Neumayr is California Political Review's *press critic.*

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Hon. James L. Brulte
California Senate Minority Leader

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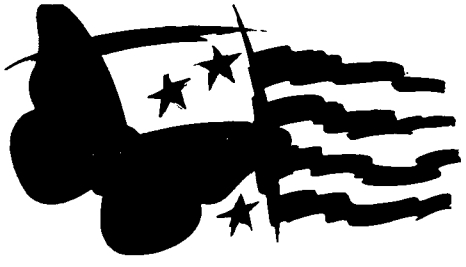

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with-the-flag-flying" types in her memoirs — the press reported Reagan's weariness with his wife's badgering. The *Washington Post* reported that at one point Reagan told Nancy to "Get off my goddam back!"

BUT THESE days the press accords Nancy Reagan canonical powers over the meaning of Reagan's ideas and vision for the country. *Newsweek* columnist Jonathan Alter is sure that Reagan would agree with him on stem cell research. "I'd wager he would have favored it," writes Alter, who now informs his readers that Reagan was just a closet progressive adroit at persuading "his base to think he was with them even when he wasn't."

How does Alter know that Reagan would support experimenting on destroyed embryos? "At Reagan's core was his faith in the power of personal experience. His own personal experience revolved around Nancy, of course. If she passionately favored stem-cell research, it might have taken him a while, but he probably would have come around," he writes.

The press's idea of honoring Reagan's "legacy" is to undo it — a job it seeks to accomplish by touting the liberal views of his wife and children (excepting Michael Reagan) as his own.

The *Washington Post* reported tributes to Reagan's "willingness to cooperate with Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev in reducing the threat from nuclear weapons." Got that? Reagan had a "willingness to cooperate." The *New York Times* headlined Mikhail Gorbachev's op-ed, "A President Who Listened." Not A President Who Led, but A President Who Listened.

Reagan was a giant in a city of political pygmies. Yet the dwarves are still convinced their "sophistication" is superior to his "simplicity." Casting about for words of faux praise, the press resorted to patronizing Reagan in death. They couldn't bring themselves to admit that he was right and they were wrong — that

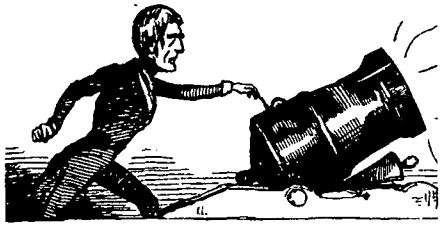
WHAT YOU HAVEN'T BEEN TOLD ABOUT GUN CONTROL

By SAM PAREDES

How adequately to describe the Sacramento legislative majority? About all you can say is sick, sick, sick. Too harsh? You decide:

Led by Senator Jackie Speier, Democrats crammed through SB 1733 to ban gun shows at the state-owned Cow Palace in Daly City. Why? Democrats don't like gun shows. It's no matter that no crime has ever been committed at a Cow Palace gun show, or that gun shows are just law-abiding citizens legally selling, trading, or displaying legal firearms. But get this: the Cow Palace can host the Exotic-Erotic Ball and "rave" parties. These Democrats don't mind the live sex acts performed on a public stage and nudity is perfectly acceptable. So what if at least two people have died at recent rave parties where drugs and alcohol flow like water? Sex, drugs, liquor, violence in a state-owned facility? — all fine, but legal gun shows send the wrong message to the community.

How about passing annual resolutions to celebrate transgender, bisexual, and homosexual promiscuity while refusing to honor the family? Assembly Rules Committee Chairman Cindy Montanez and members Loni Hancock, Christine Kehoe, and Gene Mullin (all Democrats) killed Assemblyman Jay LaSuer's ACR 204 honoring "Mom and Dad" — just too controversial.



One more just for kicks. On June 28, Assembly Republicans, again led by troublemaker LaSuer, proposed to mark July Fourth on the Assembly floor to celebrate freedom. The Legislature regularly celebrates Cesar Chavez, Tibetan Monks, Cinco de Mayo, and the retirements of just about anyone who decides to retire. LaSuer suggested inviting Color Guards from the four armed services, Pearl Harbor survivors, and, as guest of honor, war hero, former POW, and former U.S. Senator Admiral Jeremiah Denton. It all hit Assembly Speaker Fabian Nunez like a chicken bone stuck in his throat. He cancelled the event but, thank God, the Governator came to the rescue, moving it to his conference room.

The Sacramento majority — no less than three do it justice: sick, sick, and sick.

Sam Paredes is executive director of Gun Owners of California.

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the clear-eyed conservatism they disliked in him won the Cold War.

The *New York Times* editorialized that Reagan was "fortunate" that a visionary like Gorbachev appeared on the world stage to lead him toward peace. "He was fortunate to have as his counterpart Mikhail Gorbachev, a Soviet leader ready to acknowledge his society's failings and interested in reducing international tensions," the *Times* wrote.

Gorbachev's op-ed was equally misleading. It might as well have been headlined, "A President Who Listened To Me." Gorbachev indulged himself with a few moments of self-congratulation, "Of course, the new Soviet leadership could have continued the old ways." This is like a bank robber patting himself on the back for giving up theft.

GORBACHEV SAYS he took a "new path" but doesn't admit that was only because Reagan had blocked off the old one. Even in his encomium to Reagan, Gorbachev allowed himself one last fit of resentment at Reagan for his "evil empire" truth-telling. Gorbachev wrote of Reagan's "confrontational rhetoric toward the Soviet Union, and more than rhetoric — by a number of actions that caused concern both in our country and among many people throughout the world."

When Gorby dies, will newspapers like the *Times* — which praised Reagan between plenty of throat-clearing qualifications — offer similar qualifications in obits about him? Will they record, for example, that Gorbachev supported persecuting the kulaks?

Before Gorbachev was elevated to the status of an oracle of bottomless moral authority, press accounts would acknowledge that he had been a Stalinist. When that was *de rigueur* in the Soviet Union, he penned essays on the glories of Stalinism and was a supporter of Lenin's "one step forward, two steps back" doctrine. As a party climber and lackey to the Soviet thugs, Gorbachev had no problem implementing ruthless communist policies (such as ousting from schools children whose parents had committed ideological sins). Back in the 1980s, *Time* magazine quoted a Soviet who remembered Gorbachev explaining to him the importance of "brute force, which alone secured working discipline on the working farms." Even when Gorby was supposedly on his new path, he was longing for the old one. "In politics and ideology, we are seeking to revive the spirit of Leninism," Gorbachev wrote in *Perestroika.* As Baltic nationalists no doubt remember, Gorbachev didn't want the evil empire to break up. He tried to preserve it aggressively, sending off checks to thuggish Soviet client states until the treasury was empty.

As a disciple of Lenin, Gorbachev should remember Lenin's phrase, "useful idiots." Had Lenin witnessed the Reagan funeral, he would have called Gorby Reagan's useful idiot. Reagan pulled a frightened Gorbachev toward peace. He didn't mind letting Gorbachev wallow in his own vanity and delusion if that made it easier to end the Cold War and dismember the Soviet Union. Historians will pay little attention to Gorbachev's self-mythologizing. But they will record Reagan's "Mr. Gorbachev, tear down this wall." The irony of Reagan never caring about who got the credit is that history will heap credit on him while ignoring those like Gorbachev now claiming credit for Reagan's good works. CPR

THE LAW

More like a field goal

Did the Supreme Court 'punt' when it scuttled a California atheist's challenge to the Pledge of Allegiance because he didn't have 'standing' to bring the case?

HAROLD JOHNSON

YOU WOULDN'T know this to hear some grumbling from both the left and right. The Court's decision in *Elk Grove Unified School Dist. v. Newdow* not to decide was widely panned as the easy — or cowardly — way out. The cynics do the justices an injustice. While church-state issues are what put the case in lights, the issue of a

CPR *Editorial Board member Harold Johnson is an attorney with Pacific Legal Foundation (www.pacificlegal.org).*

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plaintiff's standing is also constitutionally momentous – the opposite of a "technicality." Conservatives, of all observers, should understand. The "conservative" creed holds as holy writ that courts must not usurp legislative functions. Judges should stay clear of policy-making, and confine themselves to interpreting the law and the Constitution.

THE INTERPRETIVE task is required when courts are confronted with concrete disputes between parties that hold a direct, tangible, individualized stake in the outcome. Allowing people to launch lawsuits based on merely philosophical objections to this law or that, would transform courts into debating societies — and halls of policymaking.

Which is just what the Ninth Circuit allowed itself to become in this case. Never mind its audacious claim that having public school students recite the words "under God" is unconstitutional. Simply by allowing the case to go forward, the Ninth Circuit was confirming its reputation for judicial joyriding. This is because, as I wrote in *CPR* prior to the Supreme Court's (umpteenth) slap-down of the Ninth Circuit, the father who filed the lawsuit didn't have legal custody of his daughter. Under clear principles of California law, he couldn't use her — or his relationship to her — to get his anti-Pledge crusade into court.

It took an artfully selective reading of California case law to permit Dr. Michael Newdow's case to continue. The Ninth Circuit leaned heavily on a 1980 California Court of Appeals ruling, *Murga v. Peterson,* that held a noncustodial parent may be involved in the child's religious activities. What the court conveniently passed over was *Murga's* statement that "the custodial parent undoubtedly has the right to make *ultimate decisions* concerning the child's religious upbringing."

In response to this contortion of California precedents, former California Supreme Court Justice Joseph Grodin sent his own friend-of-the-court brief to the U.S. Supreme Court, imploring the justices to show more respect for the courts of his state than the Ninth Circuit had done.

The Ninth Circuit's attempt to concoct standing for Newdow was disturbing in a second sense: It pointed toward the "federalizing" of family law. The Ninth Circuit was setting a precedent whereby federal courts could essentially create their own do's and don'ts for marriage, divorce, domestic relations, and parenting questions, imposing their arbitrary vision on a sensitive field of policy historically left to state lawmakers.

The Supreme Court recognized that danger in its "Pledge" ruling: "Long ago we observed that 'the whole subject of the domestic relations of husband and wife, parent and child, belongs to the laws of the States and not to the laws of the United States,'" Justice Anthony Kennedy observed in the controlling opinion. He was also eloquent in defense of strict rules for standing: "The standing requirement derives from the constitutional and prudential limits to the powers of an unelected, unrepresentative judiciary."

So in the end, allegiance was pledged in the *Newdow* case: By showing the atheist doctor the door and rapping the Ninth Circuit's knuckles, the Court pledged fidelity to concepts at the foundation of American freedom: judicial restraint and local control.

When – and it's surely when, not if – the issue of the Pledge again percolates up to the Ninth Circuit, here's hoping it goes to a three-judge panel that has at least two members with the good sense of the single dissenter in *Newdow.*

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Judge Ferdinand F. Fernandez – who has since retired from the court – tried in vain to keep his colleagues from going on an ideological crusade. He pointed out something that might be relevant to appellate judges blessed with a measured understanding of their role and reach: the Supreme Court has already observed, while reviewing other First Amendment questions, that the words "Under God" in the Pledge are perfectly constitutional, amounting to "ceremonial" patriotism.

Observed Fernandez: Lower court judges "had best respect what the (Supreme Court) majority says rather than read between the lines." He also tried to counsel a sense of perspective: "Legal world abstractions and ruminations aside, when all is said and done, the danger that 'under God' in our Pledge of Allegiance will tend to bring about a theocracy or suppress somebody's beliefs is ... picayune at most." For Americans startled and disoriented by the majority's anti-Pledge decree, the dissent offered a welcome validation of their instincts, a reassurance that the Pledge isn't a mantra for yahoos, but an uplifting credo of a free people.

JUDGES MIGHT banish it, Judge Fernandez wrote, "if they limit themselves to (legal) elements and tests, while failing to look at the good sense and principles that animated those tests in the first place.

"But they do so at the price of removing a vestige of the awe we all must feel at the immenseness of the universe and our own small place within it, as well as the wonder we must feel at the good fortune of our country."

Few judges in the federal system, and very few in the Ninth Circuit, could say it as well, unfortunately.

They used to say there was "no law west of the Pecos." These days, when it comes to government's duty *not* to discriminate, you could say there's "no law west of the Bay Bridge" — the bridge to San Francisco.

As I have written previously, racial favoritism, forbidden by the California Constitution, is official policy in the City by the Bay. In public works contracts, for instance, San Francisco bureaucrats review a bid from a contractor who is black, Latino, or a woman, they must pretend the bid is 10 percent below real cost. Meanwhile, proposals from white males are reviewed at full price.

Even though this kind of systematic bias has been illegal at least since 1996 — when California voters added Proposition 209 to the state Constitution prohibiting race and sex preferences in government — San Francisco City Attorney Dennis Herrera happily defends the city's policy of pigeonholing people by pigment. In fact, he has boasted about his "winning streak" against Prop. 209 lawsuits. Court challenges to the racially skewed contract system have been moving like molasses thanks to his procedural stalling tactics.

In early July, however, defenders of equal rights finally got a chance to claim bragging rights. Herrera

Really a schnook

Bill Clinton has written a book
And nearly four years he took
To devise new lies
As a way to disguise
That fact that he's really a schnook.

Bill Clinton still thinks he's a whiz
And that laud and great honor are his
For the years that he spent
As our president
In learning the meaning of "is."

Bill Clinton has a red, red nose,
Reminds us of a red, red rose,
And when he lies
It's no surprise
That like Pinocchio's it grows.

— by Joy Skilmer*

** The political verse of Joy Skilmer, né Lyn Nofziger, is available at both Barnes and Noble.com and Amazon.com and from MND Publishing, 573 Marina Rd., Deatsville, AL 36022. Keep up with Lyn's "musings" at: www.lynnofziger.com*

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lost a high-profile employment-discrimination case — perhaps the first-ever courtroom defeat for San Francisco's racial spoils policies. A San Mateo County jury awarded $30,600 in damages to Allen Harman, who was denied a management job at San Francisco International Airport because he's white. A safety employee since 1991, Harman applied for a promotion in 1997. But the city was using a racial calculus for hires and advancements; it was arbitrarily trying to make the airport's ethnic mix mirror the general population's. Harman's color didn't fit the formula.

When Harman wound up at the top of the promotion list, and others in the pool also turned out to be white, the order came down to reopen the application process, with a mandate for more diversity. The job eventually went to a minority candidate.

Although the city dropped its explicit quota policy after Harman filed his lawsuit, evidence developed in his case indicated that this was a change on paper only, and skin color continued to guide personnel decisions informally. It was also found that, in the past, applications for some jobs had been placed in color-coded envelopes — with yellow stickers for Asian applicants, black or brown stickers for African-Americans, and white stickers for Caucasians.

Harman's courtroom triumph over the city's color-obsessed quota commissars may be unprecedented — but partly for this reason, officials refuse to acknowledge that anything has changed. City Attorney Herrera defiantly vowed an appeal.

As *CPR* READERS KNOW, one person San Francisco need not fear is state Attorney General Bill Lockyer. He has not lifted a finger to enforce Prop. 209, even though dozens of cities, counties, and local agencies have yet to comply fully with its requirements. San Francisco is far from the only Prop. 209 scofflaw; it's just the most brazen.

So the banner of fairness that Lockyer has dropped must continue to be carried by what state law calls "private attorneys general," such as the Pacific Legal Foundation, which represented Harman in the San Francisco case.

The battle to see the rule of law enforced in San Francisco and compliance by recalcitrant bureaucrats elsewhere promises to be long and difficult. Struggles for justice often are, but that doesn't make them less essential, or less rewarding. CPR

ON CAMPUS

Procrustes' Modern Bed

California College Republicans, like Theseus, oppose left-wing thugs pouncing on unsuspecting minds.

MICHAEL P. DAVIDSON

IN GREEK MYTHOLOGY, a bandit known as Procrustes offers hospitality and an iron bed that he says fits anyone who lays on it. Well, the unsuspecting victim never really fits on the bed. Procrustes stretches the shorter victims until they die and cuts the limbs of the taller victims to make them fit the length of the bed. After a while, the disappearance of visitors to the area becomes notorious, people stop coming, and the land grows desolate. Fortunately, Theseus, one of the greatest of Greek heroes, puts an end to Procrustes by fitting him to his own bed. For centuries, the only thing left of Procrustes was his name, becoming synonymous with cruelly forced conformity.

But Procrustes is back now preying on the minds of America's youth. His strategies are different, but the results are the same. The Procrustean bed is now the American university, and Procrustes has recruited a new posse of college professors, administrators, and curricula.

The story of the leftist college scene is no secret to

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anyone, really. Governor Ronald Reagan quipped that communists could always find a safe haven at an American university. Especially after Reagan became president, American communists retreated to the dark halls and libraries of college campuses, losing themselves in obsessive theorizing about evil America, fantastic conspiracies, and the glories of communist revolution. Liken them to trolls growing bitter about the free and beautiful world around them.

LEFT-WING ACADEMIA takes out its frustrations by pouncing on unsuspecting minds. Students enter college to become educated, prepare for the life ahead, and realize the American Dream. But they're not really educated at all. They are kept from preparing for the world they will enter by being force-fed a fatally distorted world view. Most enter with an open mind, an intellect ready to be shaped and challenged, and a heart ready to take on causes. They often arrive vulnerable; then they're brainwashed.

In the university, the American Dream is viewed as a fallacy. In class, we study Marx, Engels, and the virtues of communism, but little or nothing of Adam Smith and the virtues of economic and personal freedom. We read about how and why communism could and should prevail, but that it did not. The reasons are never made quite clear. We read that Ronald Reagan played no more than a small role in ending the Cold War. After all, he was just a war monger, stupid and opportunistic. We read almost nothing positive on the Reagan legacy.

At CSU Long Beach, students holding a pro-America rally during Black History Month were physically threatened. Apparently, February is not a month in which we can celebrate an America for all Americans. Cal Poly San Luis Obispo attempted to expel a student for posting advertisements of a conservative speaker. At Berkeley, upon the arrival of former Accuracy in America Executive Director Dan Flynn to speak, protesters held signs saying "stop racial censorship" as they — in Nazi-like fashion — burned Flynn's books. The irony was lost on the radical protesters. Also at Berkeley, on the anniversary of 9/11, the administration was going to distribute flags — but feeling that American flags would be offensive, they planned to distribute white (surrender) flags. College Republicans learned of the plan and published an article on their website that was picked up by *The Drudge Report.* The wrath of the nation (judging from the chancellor's ultimate reaction) at that point descended upon his offices, which reportedly had never seen anything like it — alumni voicing their displeasure in particularly strong terms. The chancellor held a press conference criticizing College Republicans for "trying to turn this into a political event." The protests did not diminish. Finally, the administration allowed College Republicans to distribute red, white, and blue flags.

Republican students are, for their beliefs, routinely accosted, subjected to verbal abuse, threatened with physical attack — literally spat on — by thugs spouting about the evils of giving offense and the crying need for some measure of tolerance.

That's education, folks. "What the youth thinks," Peggy Noonan said, "the future knows." Is this the kind of college education you want your children to have? Plenty of students are politically active, although the majority are politically apathetic. These apathetic students are most vulnerable to the indoctrination factory of lies and left-wing conformity run by their professors and peers. Most campuses have become left-wing procrustean beds.

The situation is challenging, but also full of hope. The California College Republicans, like Theseus, oppose the campus Procrustes. We are the other half of your balanced education. Studies show political thinking solidifies between ages 18 and 24. Students' political loyalties at graduation often determine how they vote the rest of their lives. We know that if nothing is done students will be exposed to only one perspective and many will drift into liberalism.

With hard work, in less than two years (beginning in the 2001-2002 academic year), California College Republicans grew from about eight to more than 60 chapters with 7,500 members. Our statewide publication, *Moxie,* shares resources and information with more than 5,000 members and supporters.

WE RECRUIT, inform, train, and empower students on every college campus in California. Since last January, we have trained more than 300 College Republicans. We recruit new members year 'round and bring articulate speakers to campus who explain Republican principles. We host debates, distribute publications, speak up in class, and participate in student government.

We register voters, expose liberal hypocrisy, perform community service (CRs, for example, collected food and money to go to fire relief, and have held walks for the American Heart Association) provide a youthful face to the Party, and help elect Republicans. We advocate free and responsible thought and expression on college campuses. Like Theseus, we help liberate people's minds and hearts from forced conformity.

As the late Lee Atwater said, "We will fight until

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hell freezes over, and then we will fight on the ice." The success of California College Republicans is creating a new generation of trained, articulate, loyal, and energized American leaders. CPR

THOSE IN POWER OVER US

Redevelopment's Heavy Hand

People who have lived or done business in the same location — perhaps for a generation — are forced out by a little known local government body.

M. DAVID STIRLING

In late 2002, Elaine Evans, together with business and residential owners of 22,883 other parcels in over twenty separate neighborhoods of San Jose, were notified by the local redevelopment agency (RDA) that their properties were "blighted." Neither the 120 property owners who opposed the designation at the agency's public hearing, nor the 1,422 who protested in writing, nor the several thousand whose properties were not — except perhaps in a most technical sense — blighted, nor Elaine Evans' court challenge, have so far succeeded in derailing this attempted massive government take-over of their properties. Ms. Evans' appeal is pending.

It's happened regularly in California for several decades: homeowners and small business owners in older sections of a community are informed that their property has been found to be "blighted;" that the local RDA is prepared to acquire their property through eminent domain, if necessary; and that an appraiser will be recommending a price the RDA will offer them for their property, should they prefer to take the money and leave. Whichever route they choose, the RDA's ultimate success is rarely in doubt.

The harsh reality is that people who have lived and/or conducted business in the same location — perhaps for a generation or more — are forced from their homes and businesses by a little known local government body with a better use in mind for their property. Invariably, that better use is calculated to generate substantially greater revenues for the RDA than the existing property owners are.

Variations on this scenario have played out thousands of times in California since the state's redevelopment law was enacted more than a half-century ago. While the original purpose of this expanded use of eminent domain was to provide an expedient remedy to city neighborhoods plagued by boarded-up warehouses, abandoned gas stations, flop-houses, alcoholics, and prostitutes, redevelopment planners quickly discovered they also could utilize eminent domain on residents and small businesses in older, modest, yet still viable neighborhoods of the community.

With the vast financial incentives redevelopment provides — power to condemn private property and give it to other private parties; power to give developers public money to develop projects; sole use of all property tax increases generated over the life of the project (often 30 years); and authority to sell bonds to raise revenue to fund the project, all without a vote of affected property owners or local residents — RDAs almost overnight became the state's most powerful and least accountable political subdivisions. Today, 400 of California's 478 incorporated cities have active redevelopment agencies. (Nearly all states have adopted redevelopment laws modeled largely after California's.)

Few can reasonably deny local government the tools necessary to "redevelop" the decrepit, crime-infested, and virtually hopeless areas so familiar to many large cities. Even moderate-sized communities have effectively utilized RDAs to create clean, productive, people-friendly neighborhoods where once urban wastelands lay. But as often as not over the past half-century, redevelopment law in California and in other parts of the country has been misused, some would say abused.

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Of redevelopment's several controversial elements, two in particular stand out as the most vulnerable to misuse. The first is the lack of clear definition — and RDAs' selective application — of redevelopment's triggering mechanism, the designation of "blight." The second is the grossly expanded interpretation of the term "public use," as contained in the Fifth Amendment of the Constitution. (" ... nor shall private property be taken for public use, without just compensation.")

THE ORIGINAL definition of "blight" in California law was taken from the federal government's urban renewal statute of 1949. In that law, Congress did not define blight in clear, unambiguous language. Instead, the statute provided federal funds for a "slum area or a blighted, deteriorated, or deteriorating area." By granting the urban renewal administrator unfettered discretion to decide what property-characteristics fit within the statute's purpose, Congress effectively set the future course for blight designation. As a result, the U.S. Supreme Court's controlling precedent (in *Berman v. Parker,* 1954) essentially defined blight to be in the eye of the beholder.

Following Congress's lead, mid-century California legislators created a definition of blight as amorphous as is the federal statute. *Sacramento Bee* columnist Dan Walters wrote recently (the *Bee,* June 15, 2004) that over the years "local officials stretched the definition to ludicrous lengths. One city even declared unoccupied, undeveloped marshland to be 'blighted' because it was subject to periodic flooding." Walters observed that blight was misused to make way for "shopping centers, auto malls, big-box retailers, and other projects," primarily for the purpose of generating additional sales tax revenues to make up for property tax revenues lost to redevelopment projects. Although 1993 amendments to the redevelopment statute purported to (and did to a degree) make blight designations more difficult to impose, in practice, with relatively few exceptions, any city lured by redevelopment's economic incentives can still declare blight without fear its designation will be challenged, much less set aside.

When property owners in modest neighborhoods are told that their properties have been designated as blighted, virtually none realize the impact that designation has on their property. No one unfamiliar with redevelopment law (about 99.9 percent of the population) understands how the initial blight determination is made. In practice, the city (or county) contracts with and pays a consultant with past experience in making blight determinations. In the earlier-mentioned San Jose Redevelopment Project case, Elaine Evans' court brief showed the consultant's blight-bias by revealing that the agency contracted to pay the consultant $338,080.00, in return for which it would "produce a blight analysis to be used by the agency . . . to demonstrate that all or part of the Survey Area is blighted . . . in order to justify the inclusion of that geographic area within a proposed redevelopment project area." When the process is understood, what property owners are up against becomes all too clear. For those in the blight assessment business, *not* finding blight is not in their interest.

The term "public use," contained in the Fifth Amendment, was intended to limit government's ability to seize private property through eminent domain, the process used by RDAs to acquire "the project area." What historically was considered a "public use" — and what most people still today readily accept as a public use, *i.e.,* building a highway, constructing a school, a jail, a post office, and the like — only raises the question of how much money the government will pay the owner for his property. Over the past several decades, however, as modern, more ambitious planners came to regard the traditional notion of public use as too confining, the term was mutated into

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the almost limitless standard of "public benefit." This resulted in what is now routine practice: if the RDA makes a plausible showing that its seizure of the property will benefit the public sooner or later, reviewing courts generally uphold the taking.

Invariably, the public benefit standard — as compared with the public use limitation — promotes the RDA practice of taking one private party's property to give to another private party. In Chula Vista, for example, the RDA utilized eminent domain to take a privately-owned 3.2 acre parcel with an old building and give it to a major corporation at a below-market-value price, in order to build a parking lot. In exchange, the corporation agreed that within six years it would develop the adjacent property it already owned. The RDA justified taking the previous owner's land arguing that the increased business activity and employment at the corporation's new facility would generate greater city tax revenues, benefitting the public.

In Cypress, the Cottonwood Christian Center applied for a permit to build a $50 million worship center on the 15-acre parcel it had owned for several years. The city council, however, preferring Costco's proposal to build a big retail store on the property, went so far as to assert that Cottonwood's proposed religious center would itself constitute "blight" and a "public nuisance." Again, the justification for using eminent domain was the public benefit Costco's big retail store would provide by way of increased business activity, local employment, and sales tax revenues, compared with a religious center. Countless government take-overs of private property for public benefit have occurred throughout California, and around the nation, and they continue.

ONE OTHER redevelopment concern that deserves mention is the revenue-generating incentive called "tax increment financing" (TIF). Most often, TIF explains why so many communities establish and promote active RDAs. Once a redevelopment project is established, property values within the project area appreciate, in turn generating increased property tax revenues. 100 percent of those revenues remain with the RDA to spend at will and without citizen oversight; and not just for a limited time, but for the life of the project: often 30 years or more. None of the RDA's increased property tax revenues flow to overlapping local government agencies — such as the local school district — to pay for increased services those entities must provide the project area. This is but one of several bizarre characteristics of redevelopment law.

Thomas Jefferson observed, "The natural progress of things is for liberty to yield and government to gain ground." One of the surest ways for a citizenry to lose its liberties is to sit by idly while ever-more overreaching government planners — those in power over us — devise complicated programs to extinguish our fundamental right to own and use private property. The onerous burden of eminent domain in the redevelopment context falls almost entirely on modest neighborhoods, where homes and businesses are peopled not by the financially, legally, or politically connected, but by those with few resources to resist.

With California's median-priced home values making home ownership affordable to fewer households daily, and small businesses struggling ever harder to compete, it is critical that local government's vast power of eminent domain be used with care. While redevelopment has its legitimate uses, it also uproots and disperses families and destroys mom-and-pop businesses. Instead of growing government intrusiveness, it would be much more constructive to grow the notion of community pride and individual responsibility, whereby all small property and business owners can strive for a piece of the American dream. CPR

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THE FRONT LINE

Fall line-up

by Ray Haynes

The fall lineup is relatively thin for conservatives. The legislative caucuses are still solidly conservative with Senator Dick Ackerman as senate leader and the overwhelming majority of GOP assemblymen firmly committed to conservative principles. Conservatives are likely to continue to control the policy direction of the legislative caucuses after November.

The governor's office is more problematic. His legislative operation, headed by Richard Costigan, and his finance operation, headed by Donna Arduin, have a decided conservative tilt. But his agencies and departments have trouble seeing that the governor's interest is not served by pursuing the Gray Davis policies that brought him his recall. Some agency heads — Fred Aguiar, for instance — are long-time conservative heroes. Others, like Kim Belshe and Marybel Batjer, operate under the long-held conviction that belief in smaller government is an historical anachronism. They push the governor to increase spending in their agencies, and, in some ways, have pressed him into decisions that undermined his position in the budget negotiations. The governor would best serve himself by listening to Arduin on fiscal issues and leaving his agency heads to operate within the restrictions she places on them.

As for the legislative elections, November offers conservatives slim pickings. Tricia Hunter and Steve Kuykendahl, not known for their commitment to the principles of family, freedom, and free enterprise, are bidding to return to the Legislature from San Diego and Long Beach respectively.

Hunter, in her previous political life, made her name as The Republican Most Likely to Attack Her Fellow Republicans (if they are pro-life, the Party's most loyal activists). Kuykendahl is similarly challenged about recognizing his political friends. Make no mistake, their Democrat opponents (Lori Saldana against Hunter and Betty Karnette against Kuykendahl) are left-wing nutballs committed to destroying California's future. But Hunter and Kuykendahl, should they return and resume their past political habits, should be expected to stir up more trouble than cooperation among their fellow Republicans.

Others, like Bob Pohl in Santa Barbara, Steve Poizner in Palo Alto, and Alan Wapner in Ontario are not known for their conservative political activism. And little is so far known about Paul Betancourt in Fresno.

On the brighter side, a solid conservative, Dean Gardner, is running for assembly in the Fresno-Bakersfield area and another, Gary Podesto, is running for senate in Stockton. Gardner would have won two years ago had he not been abandoned by assembly GOP leadership, and Podesto has been the popular mayor of Stockton for years now. (See *CPR's* in-depth look at Dean Gardner's race, this issue, page 23.)

Each election offers a new opportunity to prove once again that a solid conservative can take out an incumbent Democrat. So it is time for conservatives to work. If these two seats move from "D" to "R," they should — but won't — end the eternal liberal chanting that conservatives can't win in California. More importantly, they will add critical pro-family, pro-freedom reinforcements to GOP ranks in Sacramento. CPR

Ray Haynes represents California's 66th Assembly District.

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The Flynt Initiative

a hustler goes political

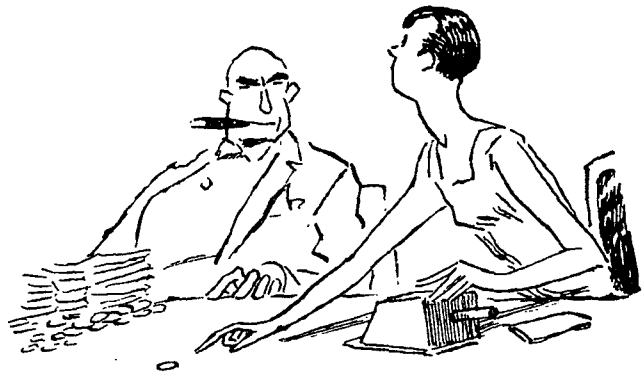
A VIRTUAL TUTORIAL ON POLITICAL SELF-SERVICE

BY STEPHEN FRANK

Regardless of one's political views, everyone would agree Larry Flynt makes for "interesting" political discussions. Publisher of Hustler magazine and owner of a card club in Gardena, Flynt is promoting Proposition 68, the so-called Gaming Revenue Act of 2004.

Prop. 68 would allow 11 card clubs (including Flynt's Hustler Casino) and five race tracks to split 30,000 slot machines. And then, *via* the fine print, Prop. 68 says no further gambling permits could ever be issued by the state of California. This is using the initiative process to serve self-interest with a vengeance.

Prop. 68's promoters say it will help education, law enforcement, and firefighting. Yet the California Police Chiefs Association, the California State Firefighters Association, the California School Boards Association, and more than 30 county sheriffs (among others) urge a "NO" vote on 68.



You don't often find Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger, Senators Tom McClintock and Dennis Hollingsworth, Treasurer Phil Angelides, Controller Steve Westly, and Superintendent of Public Instruction Jack O'Connell aligned on the same side of a political issue. But they are together in opposition to Prop. 68. Republicans and Democrats, labor and business leaders, conservatives and liberals are working together to defeat this initiative. Perhaps only Larry Flynt could turn so many natural opponents into allies.

Some interesting aspects of Prop. 68: It would allow gambling promoters to build Las Vegas-sized casinos in city and suburban neighborhoods in close proximity to hundreds of our state's schools, including some casinos that would be less than a half mile from elementary schools. The proposition's authors provided an exemption for these casinos from complying with local zoning laws or the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

Pro-68 forces say the proposition is really about helping police and firefighters because in return for the billions they would rake in, the

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casinos would contribute a percentage of their net gambling machine winnings to a state fund with restricted allocations to police and fire programs. But use of these funds is so restricted that they would hurt local police, sheriffs, and fire departments financially.

How? Prop. 68 allows the revenue to be used only to hire "additional" sheriffs, police officers, and firefighters. The costs of providing support services for these additional public safety officers — uniforms, training, equipment, vehicles, facilities — would not be covered by Prop. 68 funding. These support costs would have to be covered as a separate, additional expense by local governments. That's one reason the California Police Chiefs Association, California State Firefighters' Association, and other public safety groups have come out against the measure.

According to a January 26 California Police Chiefs Association News Release: "The California Police Chiefs Association strongly opposes the casino gambling proposition ... and intends to take the lead in urging all Californians to reject this threat to public safety."

A recent *Sacramento Bee* editorial noticed the many strings attached to Prop. 68's promised funding and that they would work to diminish local control. "While it would provide money to local governments," the *Bee* argued, "it would also deny those governments flexibility to spend money where it is most needed."

Prop. 68 also includes provisions supporters say will help schools. But, again, the money is tied up in strings: all of the funds they say will help "the children" are earmarked for non-educational programs, and the gaming revenues would be deposited in a separate special fund, not the state General Fund. The net effect, argues an independent review by John Mockler, former State Board of Education executive director, is that Proposition 68 would provide "no funding to K-12 Public Schools or Community Colleges, and would have no positive effect on Proposition 98 school revenues."

The proposition would require that education funds it generates be funneled through County Offices of Education. But, as in the case of the money for fire and police, the initiative creates costs for the county education offices that its funding can't be used to cover. Those offices would have to account for 68's contribution to their treasuries, but are not authorized to use any of it to cover the cost of that accounting — or for any other purpose. According to Mockler, this set-up would cost County Offices of Education up to $5 million annually. Not surprisingly, the California County Superintendents Educational Services Association opposes Prop. 68.

Another pro-68 argument is that the measure will authorize these huge new non-tribal casinos only if Indian tribes fail to enact agreements under which they would pay more money to the state, which this proposition, we are told, gives the tribes an opportunity to do. Sounds weird on the surface, and, given a closer look, this provision looks like nothing more than a marketing scam. The "opportunity" given the tribal casinos includes a test that could never be passed. In 90 days, 61 separate Indian tribal governments would have to renegotiate 61 separate compacts that would have to pass muster with each tribe, with the governor, with the federal government, with state courts, and with federal courts. That's all. As 68's promoters must surely know, it will never happen, making it inevitable that 16 private gambling interests would receive new exclusive rights to build huge new casinos.

National Tax Limitation Committee President Lew Uhler calls Proposition 68 a political "bait and switch," providing certain casinos special exemptions from local zoning and CEQA laws, deceptive "funding" plans for public services that cost more than they provide, more state mandates, and less local control over local programs. If nothing else, voters' reactions to Prop. 68 should tell us something about how closely Californians study the ballot measures they are asked to impose upon themselves. CPR

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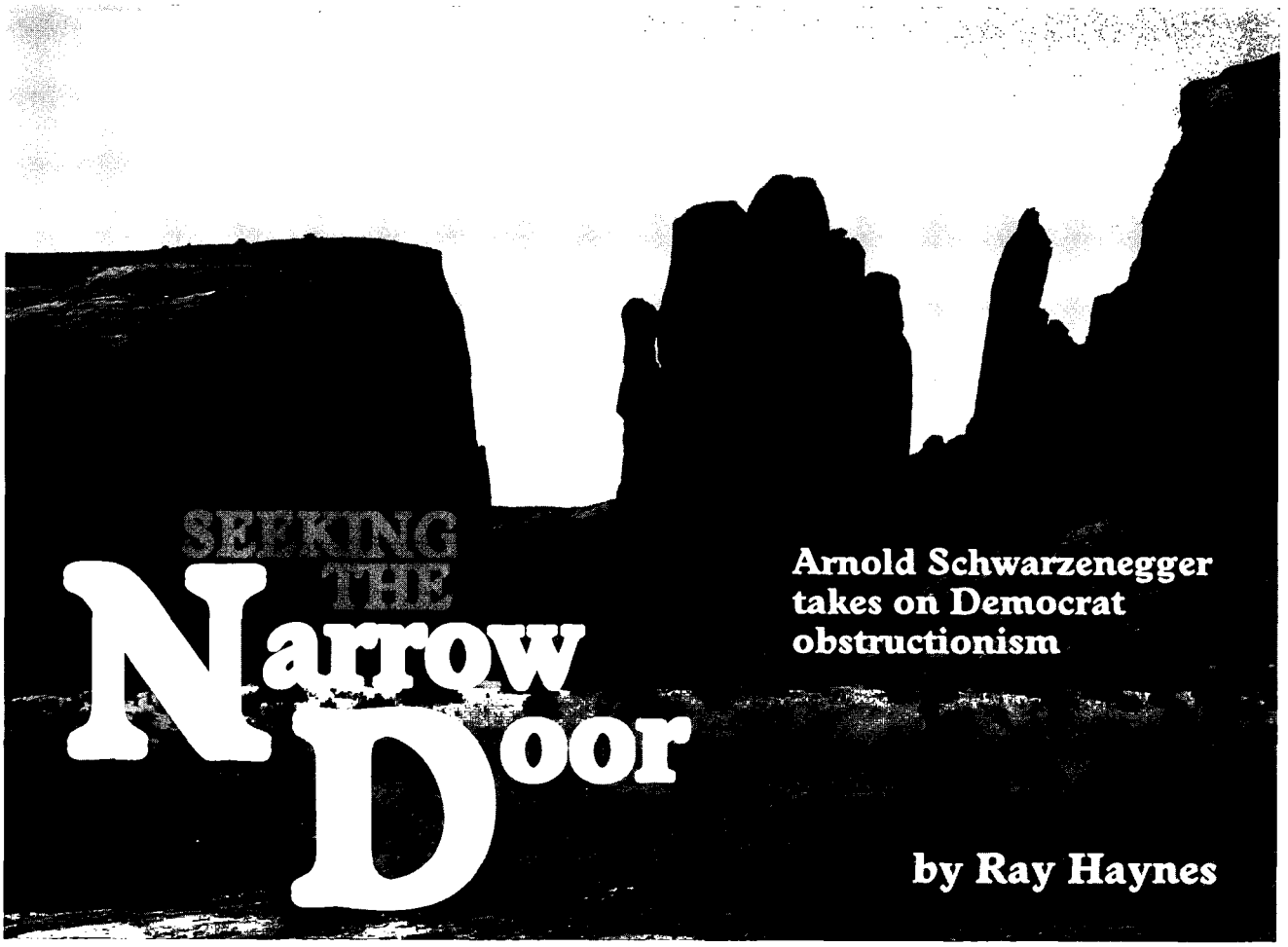

SEEKING THE Narrow Door

Arnold Schwarzenegger takes on Democrat obstructionism

by Ray Haynes

In the last 10 years, there have only been two "on-time" budgets — the 1999-2000 budget and the 2000-01 budget — the first two Gray Davis budgets. Unfortunately, those were the budgets that created the current fiscal crisis. By increasing spending from $57 billion in the 1998-99 budget to $79 billion in the 2000-01 budget, the Legislature and the governor sowed the seeds of the current deficit. When revenue dropped from $80 billion to $66 billion following the collapse of the dot-com capital gains surge (a collapse predicted by most analysts), the budget went from a $12 billion year-over-year surplus to a $13 billion year-over-year deficit in one year. Gray Davis had demanded on-time budgets and he got them — two really *bad* budgets where spending spun out of control. They cost Davis the governorship.

So when Governor Schwarzenegger announced he wanted an on-time budget the Democrats cheered. They knew they could get a better deal if time, rather than quality, was the prime budget objective. Also, they don't care to help Schwarzenegger win re-election. Since their prime objective is to spend every dollar available, and then some, they sat and waited. And their strategy almost paid off.

As of this writing — July 12 — the budget is not yet finished. As the July 1 deadline approached, the Democrats dug in while the governor was selling the family farm at rock bottom prices. Legislative Republicans said "enough," the deadline passed, and now both sides in the Legislature and the governor have settled in for a long, hot summer.

But the story of this budget is not told in the current negotiations. The story began with Gray Davis and the recall. In his first two years, Davis allowed his Democrat legislative colleagues to dictate his budget policy. To keep his office, he then tried to raise the car tax illegally (having cut it in his first two years). He allowed legislative spending to grow out of control his first two years, and the last three budgets he prepared were frozen at about $76 billion in spending. Since revenue had dropped from $79 billion to $66 billion, then $69 billion, and then $72 billion, he also accumulated $10.8 billion in debt.

He paid the ultimate price, losing his office as a result of his lack of leadership. Governor Schwarzenegger walked into this debacle in November with some things he had to do. During the recall, Schwarzenegger made

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a series of promises to obtain the office of governor: (1) He promised he would rescind the illegal car tax; (2) He promised he would balance the budget without new taxes; (3) He promised he would control spending; and (4) He promised he would push to get an on-time budget.

He rescinded the car tax right off the bat, and began a series of smart moves on the budget.

The first smart thing he did was bring on Donna Arduin as his finance director. Arduin is a veteran of large state finance departments, having been finance chief in Michigan, New York, and Florida, before taking up residence in the governor's office in Sacramento. Her first project was to submit a plan to restore fiscal sanity to the state budget. She did that in December, with cuts in the 2003-04 budget (last year's budget), and the Democrats ignored her proposals. Had they made the cuts she proposed in December, this year's budget would already be resolved.

The next smart thing the governor did was call a special session to act on the spending cuts, and to enact a spending cap for the state. That session resulted in Propositions 57 and 58, which turned the $10.8 billion short-term debt into long-term debt, and enacted a "real" balanced budget requirement (rather than a spending cap). That took two huge issues off the plate for the 04-05 budget, leaving only the spending cuts as items to resolve.

Since the 03-04 budget cuts were soundly rejected by the Democrats, the only thing to do was cut the 2004-05 budget. Arduin helped the governor prepare a January budget proposal that did that. Spending cuts, however, are the last thing legislative Democrats want. So, again, they ignored the administration's attempt to restore even a hint of sanity to California's state government finances.

Instead, they started demanding tax increases. From January to May, every article began with a Democrat call for higher taxes. The governor's January budget didn't resolve the "structural deficit," they said, and he can't solve that problem without a tax increase. Yes, the learned ones said, during the recall campaign he had promised not to raise taxes, but that was while he was ignorant of the true problems this state faces. Certainly now that he has seen the true nature of the crisis, he must agree with us that tax increases are necessary.

Legislative Republicans asked for no tax or fee increases, and, thus far, they have won that part of the battle. They also asked for a spending freeze. So far, they are losing that part of the battle.

This time it was the governor's turn to ignore the clamoring voices — and he was smart once again. This budget could be balanced with no new taxes, as his revised budget unveiled in May demonstrated. But also in his May revise he made his first mistake.

As the economy started to grow, state revenues began to increase. The May Revise predicted an increase of $1.9 billion in the current year and a similar amount in the budget year. The governor, whose January budget had cut a substantial amount in health and welfare and higher education, restored some of the spending to health and welfare. He listened to some of his advisors who wanted him to "show his compassion." Showing compassion by spending other peoples' money is usually bad policy, and, in this case, it was also poor politics. Legislative Democrats thanked the governor for his health and welfare increases, then promptly announced

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there would be no budget until he increased spending in higher education.

Schwarzenegger's "show" of "compassion" allowed Democrats to shift a potential political problem from themselves to the governor. Welfare spending is not popular. A proposal to use the unexpected $1.9 billion in revenue to increase higher education spending would have left the Democrats having to advocate more welfare, a losing proposition politically. The Democrats, not the governor, would have lost the public relations war and the governor probably would have won his on-time budget. Instead, the Dems were able to take the political high ground with voters, arguing for higher education, and so the budget battle drags on.

Arduin understood this. She advised against spending the money, but some of the governor's less fiscally responsible advisors convinced him to ignore her advice, which, consequently, weakened his negotiating position.

But then the governor got smart again. He won agreements from the K-12, higher education, and local government interests to accept funding reductions in his budget year proposals with a promise to restore some of the funds as soon as he was able. This undercut legislative Democrats, which, to put it mildly, left them howling (still the most reliable indication a real point has been scored). It's unfair, they cried; he should have included us in the deal; we *are* still important, and much more. The governor didn't flinch. He pressed forward, calling for an on-time budget. At the same time, he began negotiating with the Indian tribes for more revenue in exchange for more slot machines. Two days before the budget was due, he obtained a commitment for $1 billion for roads and freeways, and then asked for his budget. The Democrats balked, refusing to approve his higher education or his local government proposals.

Instead of pressing his advantage, however, the governor made his next mistake. He began to cave on the local government agreement. Legislative Republicans cried foul, and the governor backed off. Now the lines were drawn, and the budget deadline came and went with no agreement.

The governor has several problems. He has agreed to some of the increased spending the Democrats demand, but legislative Republicans are saying no. Some of the governor's advisors whine that Republican lawmakers are too stingy, that they won their victory when the car tax was repealed, and should be satisified with that. This argument, of course, ignores the promise the governor made to the people of California, *not* to legislative Republicans, that the illegal car tax would not stand. He had to repeal it, not to please his Assembly and Senate colleagues, but to maintain his credibility with the voters.

What legislative Republicans asked for was no tax or fee increases, and, thus far, they have won that part of the battle. They have also asked for a spending freeze. So far, they are losing that part of the battle.

With no spending freeze this year, the governor is putting off a budget disaster until his 2006 election year. It took five years for Democrats to destroy this state's fiscal condition, the governor cannot restore it in one year, but, if he allows them to continue to indulge their instinct to spend, he will never restore it.

This year has always been a transitional year. No honest budget analyst could claim that the governor could resolve the Davis debacle between November and June. All he could do is put on the brakes. His budget proposals in January and May did just that. In March, he started his California Performance Review (which is being referred to as "CPR," not to be confused with this publication) to initiate the long-term structural changes necessary to control state spending.

Unfortunately, he underestimated Democrats' desire to spend and to make the budget *his* problem rather than theirs. They pushed, cajoled, screamed, cried, whined, and moped about his "intransigence." How could

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he not raise taxes? Even now, they are claiming that he has to raise taxes next year to solve the problem. They are pushing spending even higher to force Schwarzenegger into such a tax increase.

Their goal is to preserve the grossly irresponsible spending growth of the Davis years and to add to it. They know that if they can keep the state from restraining itself from preposterous spending levels even following the recall, even when everyone knows that their obscene spending is killing the economy and destroying state government's fiscal health, even when an astronomically popular governor is trying to control it — if they can keep the gravy flowing under all that pressure to stop it, the dams will all be down. This is their ultimate vision and prize. But they know they can win it *only* if they maneuver the governor into going along, wittingly or not.

Legislative Republicans recognize the Democrat dream as a prescription for disaster and are fighting it by fighting their demands for increased spending now. If five years of Davis taught this current crop of Republicans anything, it is that *legislative Democrats will spend a governor out of office.* Governors who prize making the "deal" above the consequences for the state will lose their job. Gray Davis did it; so can Arnold. Legislative Republicans — who fought hard to place an ally in the corner office — are determined *not* to let the governor's desire for a deal lead him to a future disaster.

So, as I write, the budget is at a standstill. The good news is that the governor has recognized his Republican roots, and decided to fight Democrat calls for new spending. His California Performance Review is proceeding. It's whole purpose is to facilitate the transition the governor has asked for in Sacramento thinking, away from the formula that got us into this mess:

• first decide how much we want to spend and then go looking for the money, to:

• begin with an honest appraisal of our resources and then divide them so as to achieve the most effective, efficient government possible without unnecessarily burdening the economy that funds it all.

If five years of Davis taught this current crop of Republicans anything, it is that legislative Democrats will spend a governor out of office.

If this governor has any problems, it is his penchant for hiring a few liberals who don't seem to see that the Democrats in the Legislature want the governor — *their* boss — to lose his job. Instead, the governor's liberal aides seem to think their job is to bash legislative Republicans.

Those legislative Republicans have succeeded, thus far, in keeping out of the budget any new Democrat raids on the wallets of ordinary Californians (whether proposed openly in the form of straightforward tax hikes, or less openly in the form of increased "fees") — a key part of a long-term solution to the state's problem. They are also desperately trying to protect *local* governments from further Democrat raids on their treasuries to feed the state monster. Finally, Republicans are also trying to stop further welfare spending increases, which the Democrats think of as a sort-of birthright all their own.

In the end, spending is the key. If this governor controls spending this year, and enacts substantial structural reform in the coming year, he will sail to re-election in 2006 — if he wants it. If he does *not* control spending *and* push for substantial reform, his dream of becoming the first foreign-born president may end long before it ever has a chance to come true. CPR

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Ground Zero

Nicole Parra *v.* Dean Gardner
30th Assembly District Analysis

What might be the state's most contentious legislative election will be fought in the southern portion of California's Central Valley. Two years ago, lightly-funded 30th Assembly District Republican nominee Dean Gardner nearly beat now-Assemblywoman Nicole Parra, who captured the seat representing parts of Fresno, Kern, Kings, and Tulare counties by less than 300 votes. Parra, a *very* liberal former congressional aide, won the 2002 Democrat nomination following a contentious, sometimes bitter primary battle with moderate-conservative farmer Jim Crettol. Some political observers say the bad feeling continued after the primary, weakening Parra in this slightly Republican-leaning district. Political strategists believe substantial funding from Assembly Republican Leaders might have brought a Gardner victory. This year, new Assembly Republican Leader Kevin McCarthy says Gardner will have all the support he needs. The race promises hard fighting up to 8 p.m. election night.

KURT BARDELLA

Kurt Bardella is a political reporter for 29 Eyewitness News in Bakersfield and a former Republican campaign consultant. Send comments to kbardella@cbs-29.com.

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What was expected to be a coronation turned into a fiasco for Democrats while Republicans came agonizingly close to winning.

He was given little chance of winning. GOP nominee Dean Gardner — businessman, former teacher — had raised inadequate money, polls had him 15 points down, the press had written him off, and even his own Party thought his race a lost cause. Election night shaped up as a mere formality for Democrat Nicole Parra, former aide to Central Valley Congressman Cal Dooley (D-Fresno) and, as daughter of Kern County Supervisor Pete Parra, the next member of the Parra clan expected to achieve political prominence in the area. But what was expected to be a coronation turned into a fiasco recalling the Florida recounts of 2000. While Republicans suffered defeat in every statewide race, they came agonizingly close to winning in the Bakersfield-centered 30th AD.

Election night began according to script with Parra holding an early commanding lead. But as the evening progressed her margin deteriorated to less than five hundred votes, raising Democrat fears and GOP hopes of a very unexpected result. In the end, amid accusations of voter fraud and corruption, Nicole Parra eked out a 264-vote victory. She left for Sacramento, Dean Gardner returned to his gun-making business, and Republicans began work on recalling Governor Gray Davis.

LEADERSHIP CHANGE

The Gray Davis recall and election of Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger revived California's near-dead Republican Party. GOP Assembly leadership also changed, with term-limited Leader Dave Cox stepping down, replaced by unanimously-elected freshman Kevin McCarthy of Bakersfield.

As leader, McCarthy was given the daunting task of electing a Republican Assembly majority, something the state has not seen in almost a decade. McCarthy's strategy includes Parra's seat as a top priority target. The task of selecting the candidate with the best chance of defeating Parra began and ended with Dean Gardner, whose near-victory with limited funds promised better results given adequate resources. Gardner's advantages included an already in-place support network any primary challenger would find difficult to overcome and his own talk-radio show for increasing his already high name I.D., keeping his name in the press, and regularly communicating his platform to district voters. With McCarthy's support, Gardner sailed unopposed through the primary, preserving his funds and focus for the November general. The proximity of the 30th A.D. to McCarthy's neighboring 32nd increases the GOP leaders' ability to extend organizational and other resources to help Gardner, and contributes to his incentive to win in what, in effect, is his own political neighborhood.

ROLL CALL

For their part, Democrat leaders have done everything possible to give Parra an early advantage. Knowing that Republicans would scrutinize her every vote and every move, Democrats gave Parra committee chairmanships (a courtesy rarely extended to freshman lawmakers), three offices (most lawmakers get two), and a staff estimated at more than 20 — significantly larger than the average lawmaker's. Parra's name has appeared on some of the Democrats' highest-profile legislation, most notably the Megan's Law Reform Act. And Democrat leaders reportedly have permitted Parra to sit out controversial votes that might have supplied ammunition to a Republican challenger. Parra calls accusations that the leadership is protecting her in this way unfounded and ridiculous.

In any case, it is evident Republicans intend to concentrate their attacks on Parra's record of votes cast, or not cast, as the case may be. "Nicole has squandered her advantage as an incumbent because she's voted like a liberal," said Republican political strategist Mark Abernathy. Abernathy, a veteran of more than

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Parra's votes for Gray Davis's high-spending budgets and support of Cruz Bustamante are examples of how out of touch she is with the district.

three decades in Kern County's political wars is a key advisor to House Ways and Means Committee Chairman Bill Thomas. He ran Kevin McCarthy's 2002 Assembly campaign and served as statewide coordinator for the Davis Recall Committee. He contends Parra's votes for Gray Davis's high-spending early budgets and support of Lt. Governor Cruz Bustamante during the recall election are just a few of the many examples showing how out of touch the Democrat is with the rest of the district. "Her votes would work in a San Francisco or Los Angeles district, but in the more conservative Central Valley her record doesn't play well," he believes.

"Dean Gardner can win," he said, "if he can communicate to the Arnold Democrats that [Parra's] voting record is too liberal for this state." McCarthy agrees, saying "her voting record will be a big focus of the campaign."

While they may provide a point of attack, Parra's Assembly votes also provide her an advantage. "She has a record she can campaign on now," Abernathy said. "She has a platform to run on, something she didn't have last time down. Last time it was a campaign of ideas, now it's the application of those ideas, and the voters will decide whether or not she has been successful ...."

THAT WAS THEN; THIS IS NOW

Abernathy cautions against too much reliance on two years ago in handicapping this race, emphasizing significant differences this time. In the last election, Party standard bearer Gray Davis left Democrat voters dispirited while Davis's rival, Republican Bill Simon, Abernathy argues, was too conservative to convince them to jump ship. As a result, almost 1.8 million Democrats stayed home statewide on election day.

"Now," Abernathy said, "We have a presidential election year and those Democrats that stayed home before will be out in full force in November. If [Parra] can convince those Democrats to vote for her, she has a chance."

In addition, Abernathy said, "Gardner's off to a slow start. His state of organization is not where it should be right now," especially with more Democrats expected to vote this time.

But despite the expected rise in Democrat turnout, Kern County Republican Party Executive Director Kevin McDermott says recent voter registration numbers give Gardner a good chance of winning. "In 2002, the 30th Assembly District stood at 37.7 percent Republican," McDermott said. "Now, just two years later, it's at 40.04 percent. There are 3,700 more Republicans now than there were two years ago; there are 4,100 less Democrats now than two years ago. That's an net swing of over 7800 voters." He says that looking "at where Republicans won in the last election" shows "that Republican candidates won whenever a district was over 38 percent Republican in voter registration."

THE ARNOLD EFFECT

Republican candidates statewide are banking on an "Arnold-effect" to carry them to victory. Since his election, Schwarzenegger has been polling in the high 60s and nearly every political figure is trying to get his or her picture taken with the "Governator." Recognizing the importance of spreading around the governor's political

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'In 2002, the 30th Assembly District stood at 37.7 percent Republican. Now, just two years later, it's at 40.04 percent.'

strength, GOP Leader McCarthy included (in a post-Primary seminar for Republican legislative nominees) an opportunity for the candidates to have their picture taken with the governor. These pictures, however, can only be used with Schwarzenegger administration permission. This photograph element in the proceedings was further confirmation of Schwarzenegger's high standing with voters and of the central role Republican candidates believe the governor can play in winning campaigns.

The extent to which the Arnold Effect will find its way into Gardner's Central Valley race remains to be seen. "Arnold will spend his political capitol wisely," says Abernathy. "He will ultimately decide where he needs to be and whether or not it is to his benefit or detriment to campaign for a candidate." Still, it would seem that if the Assembly Republican leader comes calling at Schwarzenegger's door, the governor would be hard-pressed to turn him down. "We'll wait and see how the campaign progresses," McCarthy said.

THE BOTTOM LINE

Gardner is in an uphill battle trying to unseat an incumbent who, in the last election, accumulated nearly $2 million in funding, and who is expected to have as much or more this time. His campaign account will be better funded than in '02, but will still fall far short of Parra's expected war chest. Even so, both Abernathy and McCarthy call this race "up for grabs," with neither candidate holding a clear advantage.

For Parra, the key may be to stay above the Dean Gardner fray, keeping the campaign positive while touting her legislative achievements. For Gardner, it may be convincing voters he is going to Sacramento to help Kevin McCarthy and Arnold Schwarzenegger. One potentially good omen for Gardner is the recent defeat of Parra's father, Pete Parra, by newcomer Mike Rubio in the elder Parra's bid for a new term on the Kern County Board of Supervisors — the first time Valley voters have said an emphatic "No!" to the Parra name.

The pressure is on for both candidates: Parra trying to preserve a political legacy in the Valley as well as her own political career; Gardner taking what will almost certainly be his last shot at proving that, given adequate resources, he can deliver an election night victory. And finally, for Kevin McCarthy, this race affords a chance to convince his caucus, by delivering his neighboring district, that Republicans have a legitimate shot at reclaiming the Assembly majority. CPR

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Organize, Educate, Lead

William E. Saracino

National Club for Growth President Stephen Moore

The Club for Growth moves west.

Our members help elect candidates who support the Reagan vision of economic growth through limited government and lower taxes.

— The Club For Growth statement of purpose

The most promising development in California politics since voters took Gray Davis by his scruffy pencil neck and threw him out of the governor's office occurred in early July with the formation of a California Club for Growth. The founders intend to model the local version closely on the national Club for Growth (CFG). If they succeed, CFG California could bring back the glory days of Golden State conservatism.

At the risk of seeming immodest, I will admit to knowing a bit about those days. I was fortunate to be able to play a part in them as a political action committee director (Gun Owners of California, Gun Owners of America) from 1977 to 1984 and as chief of staff for the Assembly Republican Caucus from 1984 to 1987. What the Gun Owners PACs provided, and what current times lack, was a well-financed, hard-nosed, take-no-prisoners, damn-the-establishment conservative organization willing to get out front and lead the movement.

By sheer force of will, money, and moxie, then-state Senator H.L. Richardson created a conservative renaissance in the Cal-

William E. Saracino is a member of CPR's *editorial board.*

Supply-side with clout

Special interests have their advocates.
It's time the people did as well.

Tony Strickland

During my five and a half years in the state Assembly, I have listened to hundreds, if not thousands, of people from groups demanding their "fair share" of government spending, always including an appeal to increase spending for their special interest. Most of these people seem convinced that government should provide everything for them, that government is responsible for providing jobs and services for everyone — as if "government" were a sort-of bottomless grab bag of goodies, the source of which no one either knows or cares to find out. All anyone knows for sure, in Sacramento's predominent special interest culture, is that if our team doesn't fight for it, some one else will walk off with "our" fair share.

Also through the course of those five and a half years, I

(Please turn to page 29)

Tony Strickland, who represents California's 37th assembly district, is president of California Club for Growth.

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ifornia GOP and statewide politics through his Gun Owners PACs. Steve Moore, the national CFG's president, intends to do the same thing, and has the right plan to do it. Listening to Moore speak at the event announcing the California CFG, I heard the same breadth of vision, strength of purpose, and political street smarts evident as Richardson discussed his plans *circa* 1976 when the gun PACs were founded.

Richardson had a clear view of what he wanted to accomplish and then proceeded with laser-like focus to establish the structures that would achieve his goals. As shown by the statement of purpose and their track record (more on this in a bit), the CFG is also clear on their aims and the means necessary to accomplish them.

Richardson could not have cared less what the GOP "establishment" thought of him, and in fact knew his actions would make him unpopular. He intended to foster change, which all establishments, by their nature, regard with deep suspicion and oppose out of a sort of reflex fear of it. Though he played more than his share of golf, H.L. was never a "country club" Republican, *i.e.,* characterized by the brain-dead "conservatism" that the left used to call "reactionary." The Country Clubbers seem always to favor the *status quo,* no matter what it is, fearing any sort of "instability" above all else. They therefore flee consistently principled politics as they would sour Chardonnay and runny Brie. Principle, after all, sometimes demands a firm stand, ignoring convenience and expediency — most distressing. Echoing Ronald Reagan's point that government is the problem, not the solution, Moore believes the same can often be said for the Republican establishment. A quick look at current federal spending makes that point hard to refute.

The Country Clubbers flee consistently principled politics as they would sour Chardonnay and runny Brie.

Richardson knew that his opposition, in addition to liberal and left-wing Democrats, included these spineless "moderate" Republicans, many of them incumbents, and the gun PACs' first targets were always in primaries. Moore is similarly unafraid to oppose incumbent pachyderms, and indeed recently came within a few thousand votes of replacing Pennsylvania's notoriously unreliable Senator Arlen Specter with solid conservative Congressman Pat Toomey. The CFG's website has a feature called "RINO Watch" — for "Republican In Name Only."

While always wanting to win, Richardson was not afraid to lose if, in so doing, we created "residuals" or future potential. He called it the "dead coyote" effect, referring to the ranchers' tactic of nailing a dead coyote carcass to a barn or fence. Other coyotes come calling and, encountering their deceased brethren, even their coyote-sized brains figure out there is happier hunting elsewhere. Defeating the bad guy was of course always the goal, and at Gun Owners we had plenty of carcasses nailed to our barn. But even unsuccessful "demonstration projects" were useful, as the target's philosophical clones saw the pain he endured and knew they could be next. Also, today's loser could often run again and win in the future.

Moore made this point about Toomey's narrow loss to Specter. "We don't need to win them all," he said, noting recent changes for the better in the voting habits of Specter's fellow RINOs. These other "moderates" evidently are in no hurry to repeat Specter's near-death experience. In addition, Toomey's principled campaign, proudly hoisting a Reaganite banner of "bold colors" has put him in a strong position to run for governor in two years.

Moore shares Richardson's understanding that candidates must possess moral clarity and a solid grounding in political ideas to withstand, after they are elected, the pressure of the *Zeitgeist* to conform. H.L. sometimes interviewed candidates himself to get this reading; other times he left it to me. Waffling and temporizing brought a quick vote off the island. Moore employs similarly effective screening. The solid voting records of successful Club-supported congressional candidates bear out its effectiveness.

Richardson understood Jesse Unruh's maxim that "money is the mother's milk of politics," and for several years Gun Owners' PACs were among the state's top two or three campaign contributors. In one election cycle we even outdid the state Republican Party, leading one wag to comment that the initials GOP now stood for "Gun Owners Party." In the 2002 election cycle, national CFG members raised or donated more than $10 million to the Club and to Club-endorsed candidates. CFG delivered nearly as much funding to GOP candidates as the number one and two corporate PACs combined, making them number one, after the Republican Party, in funds donated to Republican candidates. And as their website points

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The entrepreneur, fighting to build his business, only rarely finds time to trek to Sacramento and offer the alternative plea: to shrink government, to resist the urge to over-regulate, to fight tax increases. Entrepreneurs don't believe government should solve their problems, so they don't often show up to complain.

have seen that the entrepreneur, fighting to build his business, only rarely finds time to trek to Sacramento and offer the alternative plea: to shrink government, to resist the urge to over-regulate, to fight tax increases. Entrepreneurs *don't* believe government should solve their problems, so they don't often show up to complain.

When burdensome worker's compensation premiums, unjust labor laws, absurd regulatory schemes, and ridiculously punitive taxes are breaking the backs of California businesses, it is the entrepreneur who either applies himself more diligently or just leaves the state altogether. I have been involved in each of the past six state budgets and each time have seen special interests pressure the Democrat majority and a few liberal Republicans into growing government — always to the detriment of individual business owners and hard working families.

Enough is enough. In simple fairness, California's lawmakers must learn to conserve in times of fiscal surplus and reduce spending in times of fiscal crisis. But they'll never learn that unless California develops a force to promote smaller government, to fight for tax cuts, to prevent government regulations that inhibit real economic growth and development, and to work on behalf of our business community.

The answer is the Club for Growth, an organization that's earned a reputation for advancing supply-side economics on the national stage. Club for Growth will now focus its efforts on one of the world's largest economies: California, through the California Club for Growth — a supply-side advocacy organization that will develop massive clout. It will expose Democrats *and* Republicans who say they serve the interests of California's businesses and working families, but who routinely succumb to special interest pressure when they cast their votes. For too long, elected officials have feared losing an election if they don't raise taxes. Now, for the first time, they will fear losing an election if they do.

My fellow members on the board of California Club for Growth are Stephen Moore, founding president of the national Club for Growth; Arthur Laffer, economic advisor to President Ronald Reagan who will also serve as the California CFG's principal economic advisor; and Shawn Steel, former California Republican Party chairman. We plan to grow the Club to thousands of members and to force elected officials to consider the business community, all taxpayers, and all hard working Californians when making the tough decisions that come with the offices they hold. We can't afford to run one more business out of our state. We need Club for Growth in California to help shrink big government so enterprise can once again thrive within our borders.

For more information or to join California Club for Growth, please call 916/995-6959, send an e-mail message to *Liberty@ClubforGrowth.org,* or visit *www.CAClubforGrowth.org.*

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out, all that money went to the "most deserving candidates, not the big-spending Republicans."

"Coyote logic" and "demonstration projects" aside, the bottom line for Gun Owners was to win, in both primary and general elections. If I do say so myself, H.L. and his merry band of men knew how to do that. Our candidates were almost always opposed by the GOP establishment, and almost always outspent, often by margins of two- or three-to-one. Even so, in 1978 and 1980, when we were involved in 18 contested GOP legislative primaries, we won 14 of them. In one memorable race, our candidate defeated the wife of the out-going incumbent. H.L., along with the Gun Owners' contributors and candidates, knew what Steve Moore and CFG contributors and candidates also know: Ideas have consequences, and the better the ideas the better the consequences. Richardson and his PACs became the scourge of RINOs (*and* liberal Democrats) around the state. Often not liked, we were usually feared and respected. By November 1984, well over half the Assembly GOP caucus had been elected with Gun Owners' help, and the "GOC" contingent in the senate had become large enough to make Richardson Republican Caucus Chairman.

CFG's lifetime record against Emily's List is eight to two.

CFG has had similar success nationally during its brief existence. In 2004, CFG candidates won 17 of the club's 19 targeted races. Earlier in the year, they put together a string of eight wins in hotly-contested congressional primaries. The hyper-feminist Emily's List is the leading liberal group that "bundles" members' contributions as CFG does. So far this year CFG candidates have gone against Emily's List candidates in four elections and have won all four times. CFG's lifetime record against Emily's List is eight to two.

The Club recently notched a huge win in South Carolina, when Congressman Jim DeMint won the Republican nomination for the Senate seat currently held by Fritz "Foghorn Leghorn" Hollings. DeMint scored a remarkable come-from-behind 59-41 percent victory against a former governor. CFG members combined to contribute more than $125,000 for DeMint's race in the two-week runoff, and more than $380,000 in all. During the week before the runoff, the Club's PAC ran a $140,000 TV ad campaign that benefited DeMint. This CFG victory makes it highly likely that Hollings will be replaced in the Senate by a staunch Reaganite. Poetic justice still exists.

The non-partisan *National Journal* ranked CFG one of America's most effective political organizations — not bad for a group whose first election cycle was 2000. The *Philadelphia Inquirer* called the Club the "fund raising pit-bull of the conservative right." I came away from the July CFG presentation more encouraged and energized than I've been in a long time.

In addition to directing their members' contributions to carefully screened Reaganite candidates, CFG, as a "527" organization, can also accept "soft dollars" and spend them to counter directly the national leftist pollution of George Soros fronts like Moveon.org. I expect, however, that the political landscape dictates that most of CFG's California activity, at least this year, will be in legislative races.

Should you join? The Club's website defines its members as "economic conservatives, like-minded political contributors who are frustrated with the ideological drift of both parties today. Club members have a shared goal of contributing to and electing more Reaganites to Congress who are willing to stand for the issues that they as members care about most, issues like: cutting taxes, controlling federal spending, personal accounts for Social Security, ending the death tax, eliminating the capital gains tax, fundamental tax reform, providing true school choice and minimizing government's role in our daily lives." For the California CFG, add "electing more Reaganites to the Legislature" as well as to Congress.

CFG membership is actually free, though they do ask members to send at least $100 to at least one of the candidates they recommend. Out of such small acorns do mighty oaks grow, as CFG's nationwide success shows. You can learn more about CFG at *www.clubforgrowth.com.* In addition to Moore, the California CFG board includes Assemblyman Tony Strickland, economist Art Laffer, and former state Republican Chairman Shawn Steel. For information specific to the California CFG, call their office, 916/995-6959, or email them at *liberty@caclubforgrowth.org.*

It has been too long since California had an organization willing and able to rally conservatives and lead them to victory against all enemies, foreign (Democrats) and domestic (RINOs). I know what such transformative moments feel like, as I was part of a previous one. The Club For Growth and Steve Moore could instigate another such transformation in California if conservatives actively support them. If you're a California conservative tired of playing defense, the California Club for Growth is for you. CPR

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CRITICUS

Chiantishire

BY G.B. TENNYSON

Kennst du das Land, wo die Zitronen blüh'n?
— Goethe

NOT COUNTING the pious pilgrims who made their way to Rome over the centuries, the English love affair with Italy arguably goes back to Chaucer (late 14th century) as demonstrated in his many borrowings from and allusions to Italian literature. Centuries later this fascination with Italian literature continued unabated, most notably in Shakespeare with so many plays set in Italy that it has led to speculation, never proven, that Shakespeare had actually visited the country. But the real beginning of Italophilia (my coinage) as we know it today is, in the Critical view, the Grand Tour of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, for that had more to do with the personal encounter with the visual arts than with literature. That peregrination was virtually obligatory for those who aspired to culture and had the wherewithal to do something about it. It meant visiting the Continent, starting in the north and including among others the trip down the Rhine to see all the castles, but above all ending south of the Alps (in those days thought mostly a nuisance to get over) in order to reach the land where the lemon trees bloom.

The English Romantic poets of the early nineteenth century were especially enamored of Italy. Byron, Shelley, and Keats set up there, though the restless Byron went on to fight for Greek independence. Shelley, long resident in western Tuscany around Pisa and Lucca, perished in a boating accident off the coast near La Spezia in Liguria. Keats gave in to consumption in Rome where he is buried. Both these last two poets are remembered and studied in the Keats-Shelley House alongside the famous Spanish Steps in the heart of Rome. Perhaps the longest resident English authors in Italy were Robert and Elizabeth Barrett Browning, who settled in Casa Guidi in Florence in 1847 and remained there until Elizabeth died in 1861. It now houses a Browning museum.

THE ENGLISH were not alone. The Germans were just about neck and neck in the race to embrace Italy and her works and ways. In the second half of the eighteenth century Johann Joachim Winckelmann was waxing lyrical over the treasure trove of classical art to be found in Italy, to say nothing of the louche life he was able to lead there. Also in the latter part of the eighteenth century Goethe became an Italophile and penned the line quoted above from *Mignon's Song* in *Wilhelm*

In this number G.B. Tennyson returns to his role as CPR's *European correspondent.*

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Meister that asks "Knowst thou the land where the lemon trees bloom?" By the mid-nineteenth century at the latest, spurred on probably as much by Anglophilia or even Angloinvidia (yes, I also coined the latter word) as by anything else, Americans joined the parade. The great nineteenth-century American writers went there — Henry James, Mark Twain, Edith Wharton, among others — and were followed in the twentieth century by such disparate literary figures as Ezra Pound (buried in Venice) and Gore Vidal (now of the Hollywood Hills).

ALL THIS lofty literary love found its way into popular culture as well. Some Constant Readers may be old enough to remember the spate of American films from the fifties and sixties that glamorized Italy, from *Roman Holiday* that made a star of Audrey Hepburn to *Rome Adventure, Three Coins in a Fountain,* and indeed *Summertime* referred to in this column only recently. Oddly enough, decades later, when the we-love-Italy films had long been relegated to very late-night or classic movie channels, there appeared a new batch in a similar vein. I refer to the recent film version of Elizabeth von Arnim's 1925 *Enchanted April* (also recently remade as a stage play), *Tea with Mussolini,* and *Under the Tuscan Sun,* the latter two set in the currently most favored Italian locale, Tuscany.

It would be stretching it to say that these current films inspired the senior Critical daughter (the one who did not fall into the canal) to decide upon an Italian vacation, but surely they played a part. Moreover, the fact that the setting she and her husband (we'll call them Cam and Shawn) chose as the base for their Italian adventure was Tuscany certainly seems to have been influenced by the current crop of Italophiliac films. However, that Criticus was invited to share the villa they rented can be attributed only to kindness.

Criticus agreed to share part of their stay and, despite suffering even before departure from a mysterious, debilitating intestinal infection, made his way to Tuscany in May where he both enjoyed and suffered Italy for almost two weeks. It was all highly instructive, as foreign travel usually is. Sometimes it was even broadening, as the old cliché tells us it is supposed to be. For Criticus that meant, when all was done, making some serious cultural judgments.

As every schoolboy knows, Tuscany (Toscana) is the modern name for Etruria, which was the home of the Etruscans, a still in many ways mysterious people whose language remains an even greater mystery, despite the many surviving inscriptions, which the Romans, who could have found out about them, more or less ignored. As this schoolboy did not know, the Chianti region is not coextensive with all of Tuscany, but is a particular part lying mainly south of Florence, the pre-eminent city of Tuscany. Whether it is a civil jurisdiction or not I do not know, but it is a designated wine district known as Chianti Classico. Forget those straw-hung bottles of plonk; we're talking serious wine here.

Chianti is particularly scenic and famous not only for its wine but for having provided modern-day well-to-do Brits with their favorite holiday and second-home destination. So much so that it, and often Tuscany in general, have come to be jocularly referred to as Chiantishire, as though it were a British county. Naturally, the fashion pioneers are now saying that Chianti is passé. One should look to the north of Tuscany towards Liguria or to the southeast of Florence, the area around Arezzo. Extremer fashion-setters say the coming region is Umbria or even Le Marche, both provinces lying east and somewhat south of Tuscany. But with so many already established in Chianti it is unlikely that it will lose its appeal for well-to-do foreigners (The poorer Brits, should one want to know, tend to go to one or the other of

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the Costas along the Spanish Mediterranean shore.)

Our villa and an associated restaurant of considerable style stood on a hilltop in the Chianti region and both were part of a working farm. Italian law permits certain tax advantages if a commercial establishment like a restaurant or inn or rental villa occupies a limited portion of a functioning agricultural site. As is the case in most of Chianti our agricultural site was a spacious vineyard and an olive grove, each doubtless producing its own brand of wine or olive oil, of which there are hundreds of different labels in Tuscany alone. Thus we could sit by the pool on the hilltop and look out over a scene that appeared not to have changed for centuries. Distant rolling hills — small mountains really — encircled the valley, virtually each hill seeming to be topped by a village with a high, square church tower. The sort of scene that made one wish one had the talent to be a landscape painter, albeit one of the traditional school. Hockney need not apply.

To be sure, when one left the idyllic confines of the villa and proceeded by car into the wider world to visit any of a number of beautiful and historic sites within a day's reach, one was plunged into the maelstrom of Italian traffic on Italian roads. A terrifying experience. Upon getting behind the driver's seat of the rented BMW, Shawn was transformed into an Italian, which may in its way have been a good thing, for it meant he more than held his own on the two-lane ever-twisting roads that Italians call *autostrade,* which means more or less *Autobahnen.* But the resemblance ends with the translation, except that Italians seem to think that they can negotiate their highways at the same speed the Germans drive on theirs, which is to say without speed limit. This is rather like what it would be to take on Mulholland Drive or the route to Big Bear or California 1 at Big Sur as though one were entirely alone on the straightest stretch of Interstate 5. Criticus cowered in the backseat during these excursions including in the cities where the Vespas in their thousands roar in and through traffic with the daring that is, admittedly, as adroit as it is horrifying.

To reach a destination and somehow find a parking place was like tottering off the latest thrill ride at an amusement park, shaken and relieved. The cities and towns themselves were generally delightful, although surprisingly full of tourists in May, the Europeans coming mainly on tour buses the size of the QE2. An

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essential visit was to San Gimignano, the medieval hilltop town of towers. The thirteen towers that stand in the town are the surviving ones of seventy-two tower houses that wealthy families built in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries when San Gimignano was on the main pilgrim route from the north to Rome. Happily for posterity, if not for the residents, a plague in 1348 and a shift in the pilgrim route left the town a backwater but at the same time a magnificently preserved one, so it is today a tourist attraction of the first order that provides a good living for its 7,000 inhabitants. Only one of the towers is now open to the public, but Cam and Shawn, who never met a tower or cathedral dome they didn't like, elected to climb it. Criticus enjoyed viewing the photographs when we got home.

On another day in adjacent Umbria there was Assisi, celebrated for its most famous resident, Saint Francis, whose tomb is in the crypt of a massive cathedral on a hill. Nevertheless, Criticus found the otherwise flat town rather disappointing, perhaps because his prayers and intercessions directed to Saint Francis failed to cure his indisposition, leading a resentful Criticus to complain that the great saint liked only animals.

Also in Umbria and not so far from Assisi is the more attractive town of Perugia, set of course on a hilltop and featuring a pedestrian-only city center. It boasts a gallery that contains altarpieces by Fra Angelico and Piero della Francesca as well as paintings by its most famous son, Perugino, *il divin pittore,* who so invigorated and dominated the Perugian and Umbrian art scene in the fifteenth century that, although born Pietro Vannucci, came to be known by the name of the city. But Umbria had not forgotten my complaint about Saint Francis, so on our day in Perugia the museum workers

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If I don't repent I may find myself subject to the treatment they gave to poor Saint Sebastian so famously and so often depicted by Perugino.

had decided to stage a one-day strike, which of course closed the museums. One-day strikes seem to be a peculiarly Latin kind of activity that my northern European mind cannot quite fathom. Strikes in general are in my view usually wasteful, if not absolutely seditious. What good can a strike for one day possibly do? Other than inconvenience me?

Well, strike or not and sinful as it is to rejoice in the misery of others, I rather enjoyed as we left Umbria and passed Lake Trasimento (fourth largest in Italy) reflecting upon the fact that it was the scene of a tremendous defeat for the Romans at the hands of Hannibal in 217 B.C. The Romans lost 16,000 legionnaires hacked to death in the marshes fringing the lake, while Hannibal lost only 1,500 men. How this long-ago event could compensate for the indifference of Saint Francis and the one-day strike in Perugia can only be explained by bearing in mind that I was unwell and that my discomfort brought on occasional bouts of dementia. Or possibly that I have a childishly vengeful disposition, and if I don't repent I may find myself subject to the treatment they gave to poor Saint Sebastian so famously and so often depicted by Perugino.

ANOTHER DAY, another excursion. This one to the Queen of the Adriatic, Venice. A long early drive through which Criticus slept both from exhaustion and terror. Venice was still her charming self, even if like everywhere else overcrowded with tourists. The comforting thing about Venice, though, is that there are no cars and no Vespas. If you want to go anywhere, you go on foot or on the vaporetti, those waterbuses that ply the canals and can take you almost anywhere. (Forget about gondolas unless you are very, very rich.) Furthermore, having been to Venice in the past, an ailing Criticus felt little need to stand in a long line, four abreast, in order to get into the Basilica di San Marco. Rather, he installed himself in a series of outdoor cafes that are everywhere in Saint Mark's Square, settling finally on Florian's, the grandest of them all patronized by such luminaries as Goethe and Stendahl.

Like most of the outdoor cafes in the square, Florian's has a small orchestra sitting up on a raised platform. The orchestra plays everything from waltzes to show tunes. What is more, they charge for it, even though the music wafts out to all who pass by. But if one is occupying a table and ordering as I did ice cream and coffee, one finds a charge for the music on the bill. It was something like three or four euros, which is in the neighborhood of five dollars. All the same, one then can occupy one's place for a very long time while the young and restless look for more cathedral domes to climb.

Eventually the explorers returned and we all boarded a vaporetto to visit perhaps the most charming of the many separate islands in the Venetian lagoon. This was Burano, not to be confused with the overly commercialized Murano where they make glass. Burano makes, or used to make, lace and it is still on offer in many shops. It takes perhaps a half-hour with some stops along the way to get there. But the little island is quite charming, its houses all painted in different bright colors, supposedly to make them easier to recognize by the homeward bound. Burano also still observes the *passeggiata,* the pre-dinner promenade of all the locals that has long been a colorful feature of Italian towns, though rather lost now in the great cities.

Another day, another thrill ride to another hilltop town. One of these was Volterra, an Etruscan city of some charm. It has been a center of artwork in alabaster for 2,500 years. It also boasts a fine museum of Etruscan art, which seems to have concentrated on the funerary, and perhaps because of the emphasis on death and suffering even a Museum of Torture, which Criticus thought very promising as a destination for Vespa drivers.

There was a rest day for the weary Criticus when Cam and Shawn took off at dawn for a three-hour drive, each way, to Rome. Some longtime friends of mine in Rome were in Capri, so I begged off visiting the Eternal City and began reading, of all things, *The Da Vinci Code,* which Cam had left lying about and which was amusing company for an afternoon by the pool.

In Rome the pair managed to see all the sights at their customary dead run from St. Peter's (they

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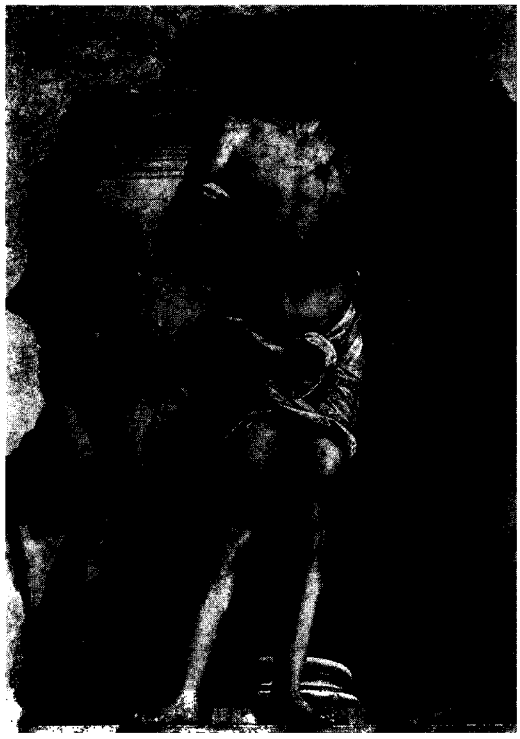
climbed the dome, of course), to the Vatican Museum and the Sistine Chapel, to the Spanish Steps, the Trevi Fountain, and even la Bocca della Verita (see *Roman Holiday* for this one). They assured me that they had tested their truthfulness with la Bocca and had each thrown a coin in the Trevi fountain. This latter prompted Criticus to break into "Three Coins in the Fountain."



Perugino s Saint Sebastian, 1478.

NOT HAVING seen the film they became concerned that they should each have thrown in three coins. I explained they had done the right thing in that the three coins in the film came one each from three American young ladies, "each one seeking happiness," and the question was "which one will the fountain bless?" I've forgotten the ending, but surely Hollywood had each find happiness, pronounced with or without a French accent.

I think our last local excursion was to the hill town of Vinci back in Tuscany. It is, as the name reveals, the hometown of Leonardo and quietly appealing because small and not much visited. It boasts chiefly a castle museum full of objects assembled from many da Vinci drawings and designs. Note, assembled not by da Vinci but rather by others much later using his sketches. There are things like a bicycle, an armored tank, and, incredibly, a machine gun. Criticus especially liked a construct of multiple mirrors that one could enter to find oneself reflected and reflected seemingly to eternity. It is known that da Vinci loved mirror writing, but there was no copy of the Code.

Hitherto I have avoided saying much of anything about the chief city of Tuscany, that is, Florence (Firenze), though we were in it frequently because it was so near and also so full of art. But the fact is that Criticus does not much care for Florence. It combines the best and the worst of modern Italy. On the one hand the newly restored statue of David is again the star of the Uffizi, and now safely placed inside, protected from the elements that for centuries wore away at it. On the other hand not so far away in the street stalls that jam the area around the central market and the Duomo one can buy a chef's apron that displays for its full length nothing but a photograph of that portion of the statue from the torso to the upper thighs. Just the thing for Mme. de Gaulle's kitchen? To be fair, one can find such vulgar contrasts in almost any city, only usually they are somewhat farther removed from the main cathedral.

The Duomo itself and the adjacent baptistery are impressive enough. The dynamic duo insisted upon climbing to the top of the dome, 468 steps-worth each way, while Criticus amused himself sitting on the steps in front of the cathedral listening to the multitude of tongues and gestures from the backpackers, locals, and other assorted wanderers who had also taken up temporary residence there or were meandering through the square, including a grandly bedizened, garishly blondined woman *d'un certain age* who blithely bicycled by as though she were in a Rolls. Suddenly the police came and shooed us all away so that the sanitation workers could storm in and wash down the steps with powerful hoses, as if to say "Avanti!" All this in mid-afternoon. Like the pigeons in the Piazza San Marco, the rabble, Criticus among them, soon returned to the steps for more chatter and litter.

FLORENCE IS also a nightmare to try to drive in, as are most large Italian cities. The signage is poor to non-existent and in any case streets that on the map promise escape are constantly being closed off and left without proper directions as to where to go, often leading one back to where one started or into a one-way street going in the opposite direction. And then there are the Vespas, but I think I may have said enough about them. Defenders always say, "But that's Italy: chaotic, disorganized, but vibrant. Yet somehow it works." And I mutter, "And sometimes it doesn't."

So here's for the other side. Increasingly in Italy, cities like Florence are not really for living in; they are

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tourist destinations, virtual theme parks, albeit more colorful and entertaining. Much of the apparent city population actually lives outside the city, both for reasons of space and cost. Venice, I am told, is full of deserted flats owned by foreigners as vacation spots, as locals can no longer afford them.

PERHAPS THIS is why the tourist sees so few children whereas a generation ago they were ubiquitous and, being Italian, loquacious. I quite enjoyed them. But even outside of the city centers children are now scarcer than they were. This in a country once famous for its families and its glorification of family life as well as its religious devotion, which also appears to be much diminished. Now couples have one designer child, as they are disparagingly called by those concerned with the future of the country. Even in the large ipercoop ("hyper-co-op" is my translation), as the Walmart-sized market we patronized several miles from the villa was called, one rarely saw a shopper accompanied by more than one child, and most shoppers had none. These lonely children seemed almost somber, but perhaps Criticus was reading that into the scene.

San Gimignano

Indeed, skeptical readers may suspect that a short-term foreign visitor frequenting chiefly tourist sites could be in no position to make sweeping judgments about the habits of the native residents. And I freely confess that I was in many instances looking for confirmation of information I had long since gleaned from contemporary reports and even book-length studies. But I did find such reports confirmed by observation. In this respect Italy is like much of Western Europe, where population growth is lower than replacement level. Will Turks really become German? Or North Africans really French? Or Pakistanis really English? Or, indeed, Albanians Italian? Note that all of these groups are also Muslim. Many Europeans, like American left-wingers, like to praise diversity, but Muslims are not so inclined. Imagine if you dare, as Criticus did, sitting with his wine on his hilltop looking down at the vineyards and olive groves of centuries of western culture, imagine, I say, the Church of Santa Maria della Salute on the Grand Canal in Venice, the Duomo in Milan or Florence, or even St. Peter's being converted into mosques. Imagine further the mass destruction of virtually all Italian art for its being blasphemous and depicting the human form. On top of that, we'd lose that superb Italian cuisine to whatever it is they eat in Mecca. O vision dystopian!

Quite otherwise was the flight back, for it took Criticus first from the modest Florence airport in a smallish, relatively low-flying short-distance jet to the very new, grand, and spotless Franz Joseph Strauss Airport in Munich and from there to the mammoth transoceanic behemoth that flies too high to see anything from. But out of Florence it was a clear day and all of central and northern Italy was laid out below in its patchwork of vineyards and farms, gradually giving way to the higher hills and the lakes of the north that nestle amidst the magnificent Alps, snowy white, eternal, and majestic even when seen from above. Finally we flew over deep forests of evergreens that confirmed that we were well away from the land where the lemon trees bloom. It was amazingly like the brilliantly conceived depiction by another lover of Italy, the Victorian art critic John Ruskin. In a passage from his *Stones of Venice* too long to be cited here, Ruskin in the early 1850s imagines the flight of a bird from the Mediterranean to northern Europe and describes just what Criticus saw a century and a half later. Except in prose much richer, much more detailed, much more beautiful.

Even for the unwell, the acrophobic, and the speedshy (*i.e.*, Criticus) as well as for the sane and healthy in California who already live where the lemon trees bloom and, as Mignon further says, where the golden oranges glow against the leafy greenery, Chiantishire and all of Italy are well worth the trip. "Dahin! Dahin!" she cries — Thither! Thither! And Criticus agrees, even while darkly adding, "while there's still time." CPR

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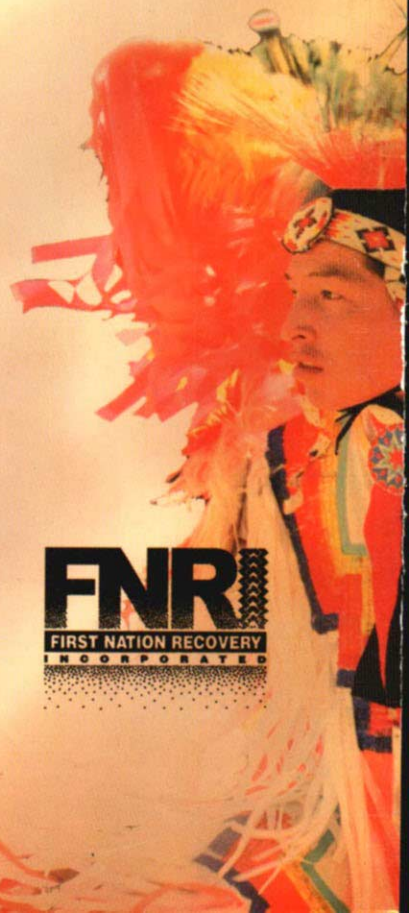

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